1/9/20     (Item 20 from file: 275)
DIALOG(R)File 275:Gale Group Computer DB(TM)
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01874993      SUPPLIER NUMBER: 17487130     (THIS IS THE FULL TEXT)
Moving images without tears. (Adobe Systems Virtual Network, 4-Sight ISDN
 Manager tools for transferring large graphics files to service
 bureaus)(Product Announcement)
Martin, James A.
Macworld, v12, n12, p121(2)
Dec, 1995
DOCUMENT TYPE: Product Announcement      ISSN: 0741-8647      LANGUAGE:
  English      RECORD TYPE: Fulltext; Abstract
WORD COUNT:  868    LINE COUNT:  00077

ABSTRACT:  Several companies are introducing new software and services to
simplify the process of transferring large graphics files from a Mac's hard
disk to a service bureau. Adobe Systems' Prepress Division's Virtual
Network client/server package will ship by the end of 1995 and will allow
file transfer over ISDN lines, WAN routers, high-speed analog modems and
Switched 56 digital services. It is integrated with Adobe's Color Central
2.5 Open Prepress Interface (OPI) print and image server software. 4-Sight
is introducing ISDN Manager, a suite of integrated utilities for
streamlined image transfer via ISDN. Emotion has introduced
CreativePartner, a graphics file transfer and annotation program that
handles a wide variety of LAN, WAN, analog, ISDN and T1 links and has a
unique and powerful error-recovery system. Eastman Kodak is working with US
Sprint to develop and maintain private image networks for companies, and
Alaris Corp's new Tropix is a set of integrated software modules for
managing images and automating workflow across enterprise networks.

TEXT:
     From SyQuest cartridges that won't mount on the desktop to modem
transmissions that mysteriously fail, getting large graphics files from
your Mac to a service bureau or other destination--under deadline--can try
even the steeliest nerves. But several new products now available or on the
horizon promise to ease those file-transfer and image-management headaches.
     Service-Bureau Networking Virtual Network from Adobe Systems' Prepress
Division (206/628-2749) is designed to make sending files to the service
bureau as uncomplicated as selecting an output device in the Chooser.
     Virtual Network, scheduled to be available by year's end, is a
client-server program for transferring and receiving files over ISDN lines,
switched-56 digital services, WAN (wide area network) routers, and
high-speed modems and analog phone lines. The software is integrated with
Color Central 2.5, Adobe's Open Prepress Interface (OPI) print- and
image-server software, which automatically replaces low-resolution graphics
files with their high-resolution counterparts just before output.
     Using Virtual Network's Client module, you select the Chooser icon
that represents your service bureau's Color Central print queue. Virtual
Network automatically compresses your files for the most efficient
throughput, dials in to your service bureau's host server, transmits the
files (containing low-resolution scans) to the bureau's Color Central
production workflow, and disconnects after transferring the files. Once at
the service bureau, your files can be output to film with the high -
resolution  images in place.
     You can download  the generic Virtual Network Client software free

from Adobe's World Wide Web site (http://www.adobe.com) or get your service bureau's customized version. Virtual Network is $1695 for up to ten client sites and $2995 for unlimited sites.

Simpler Image Transfer

4-Sight (515/221-2100) is introducing a suite of integrated software utilities that promise streamlined image transfer and management. ISDN Manager, due the end of October, lets you automatically transmit large graphics files over ISDN lines by selecting your service bureau's output device in the Chooser. ISDN Manager will include PPP Internet access through a service provider.

At the receiving end, the service bureau's 4-Sight OPi software (which is shipping in late September) is linked to Cumulus Software's Canto Network Image Database program. 4-Sight OPi automatically searches a Canto database for the high-res files linked to your transmitted documents, swaps them for the appropriate low-res images, and prints the job. ISDN Manager begins at $2795, depending on the number of site licenses; 4-Sight OPi is $3995 for unlimited users; the Cumulus Network Image Database starts at $1795 for five clients.

CreativePartner, now shipping from Emotion (415/812-9000), is a graphics file-transfer and annotation program that lets you quickly transmit large graphics files (QuickTime video, photos, and the like) across WANs and LANs, as well as analog, ISDN, and T1 lines. According to the company, CreativePartner (which starts at $495 for a two-user system) can send a 45MB file across an Ethernet LAN in two minutes.

CreativePartner's error-recovery feature tracks file transfers; when a transmission fails, the program resends the file from the point where the connection dropped, rather than starting all over again. In addition, you can annotate multimedia and graphics files and send them to colleagues for comment, without altering the original file.

Private Image Networks

Beginning this fall, Eastman Kodak (716/724-4000), working with Sprint, will develop and maintain private image networks for companies. Your digital images are stored in an image database that resides off-site on a Sprint server. With Sprint's image-retrieval software, you can search for the graphic you need, then download the file via Sprint's fiber-optic networks in any of five resolutions. For instance, you could work with low -resolution files, giving your service bureau access to your company's image network so that the bureau could download the high -resolution files for output. Pricing and other details weren't final at press time.

Workflow Management

Alaras Tropix 2.0, which Alaras Corporation (919/544-1228; alaras@aol.com) plans to ship in early October, is a set of integrated software modules for image management and workflow automation. Chief among the modules is the Alaras Tropix Server ($4990), a server-based image-management database designed to be highly customizable. You can create any number of custom data fields for searching purposes and determine how to display the information. Other modules include Tropix Server Pro ($14,990), which adds server-to-server, remote, and other connectivity tools for accessing Tropix servers; and Tropix Time Billing ($4990, available in early 1996), for tracking remote access, image downloads, and other network activities.

Third-party plug-ins will let you further customize how you work, the company says, although at press time, only one plug-in--for previewing and altering an image's angle--had been announced. However, Alaras expects many more to appear after the release of Alaras Tropix Lite, a $49 shareware version it plans to post on America Online, CompuServe, and possibly the World Wide Web by the end of 1995. Lite will provide third parties the

specifications to write a variety of plug-ins, most of which are expected
to integrate Tropix with major graphics and publishing programs.
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COMPANY NAMES:  Adobe Systems Inc.--Product introduction; 4-Sight L.L.C.--
 Product introduction; Emotion Inc.--Product introduction; Alaras Corp.--
 Product introduction
DESCRIPTORS:  File Transfer Software; Networking Software Product
 Introduction; Workgroup Software
SIC CODES:  7372  Prepackaged software
TICKER SYMBOLS:  ADBE
TRADE NAMES:  Adobe Virtual Network (File transfer software)--Product
 introduction; 4-Sight ISDN Manager (File transfer software)--Product
 introduction; CreativePartner for Macintosh (Workgroup software)--Product
 introduction; Alaras Tropix (Image browser)--Product introduction
FILE SEGMENT:  CD File 275

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01795996     SUPPLIER NUMBER: 16979123    (THIS IS THE FULL TEXT)
Methods for image management.(Seybold Special Report, Part II)
Seybold Report on Publishing Systems, v24, n18, pS44(6)
May 15, 1995
ISSN: 0736-7260     LANGUAGE: ENGLISH     RECORD TYPE: FULLTEXT
WORD COUNT:  5759    LINE COUNT:  00453

TEXT:
     Managing elements is getting more complicated as businesses delve into
archiving not only images and text, but also other multimedia elements. In
addition to the increased numbers of elements, the need to access
information
     online and, invariably, add more databases also complicates matters.
     However, before a business implements a method for managing elements
in the digital world, decisions need to be made regarding exactly what type
of system to use. Currently there are two types of systems: those designed
for items in active use and those for elements that are completed and need
only to be stored and retrieved for reference.
     Although we have divided our coverage into sections on each of the
types, we believe that, as companies progress farther into the digital
world, the lines between libraries for items in active use and those
containing data that are dormant will blur further. Companies will probably
want a single retrieval engine and viewer to be able to find both live and
morgue information, which originated from paper, microfilm, microfiche or
digital data, whether this information is in a single or multiple database
in one or distributed locations.
     Four organizations actively tackling this task talked about their
research, requirements and the products that best suited their needs.
     Following that discussion, we highlight what's new with the image
management products we saw in Boston.
     Testing a few at Time Warner
     Dennis Cheznel of Time, Inc., is building a single database system for
handling all of Time Warner's low-resolution images, text, illustrated art
and pages as independent elements for use and research among the various
divisions. (High-resolution images are a separate project.)
     Time Warner is garnering images from books and publications, internal
documents and newspaper clippings dating back to 1922. The plan is to
install
     a file server-archive for each division that is searchable across the
company. Vendors of multimedia databases were unable to provide any system
within the timeframe Time Warner needed. It looked at Cascade's MediaSphere
and P.Ink's Media Server, among other systems. It is currently testing
MediaSphere because it is a cross-platform, robust system using Sybase
database software.
     Lanman Lithotech builds its own
     Bob Nuelle of Lanman Lithotech, newly acquired by World Color, spoke
about
     its experiences both building a system to service its variety of
customers and managing the data, now growing at a rate of 1.3 terabytes per
year.
     Lanman's goal was to have a Mac client and a Mac-compatible,
open-architecture system. Other requirements included flexible file types,

built around a standard ansi relational sql database such as Sybase or Oracle
(on a Unix platform) or FoxPro for the Macintosh.
    The system is designed in a master-slave relationship, meaning that the user scanning images, or inputting them in another way, works within his local database on his own Macintosh. The database in this case would be based on FoxPro. There could be several of these slave databases around the company, installed either locally or remotely. There is also a master database, which,
    depending on the size of the installation, is installed either on a Unix platform, or, in smaller installations, on a Macintosh. Depending on the size
    and platform, the master database runs either under Oracle-Sybase or FoxPro.
    Images stored in the slave database are uploaded to the master after each new input, at the end of a session or according to specified time periods. The current version of the system features three separate parts: a database, color-correction tools and image tracking and archiving. Although they can operate independently of each other, they are available only as part of the system (not a surprising approach from a company run by former executives of a traditional, high-end vendor).
    Customized database. Camerawise stores the images that are fed to the system. The user can customize the information stored with each image (see photo, below). The system supports 256 fields.
    As images are imported into the database, fields can be filled in automatically to facilitate subsequent searching. For example, images with iptc header information can be duplicated in the database.
    Once set up, images can be batch processed by assigning a "drop" folder for the database to check and placing images to be archived in that folder. The folder can exist either locally or on a network. Image routing to one or more
    output devices can also be specified. The database doesn't store the actual images; it stores only pointers to their locations in the file system. The same is true for thumbnails and screen previews, which are stored at customizable resolutions. (Kolorbase recommends 120x120 pixels for thumbnails
    and 480x480 pixels for screen images.)
    When a high-resolution image is needed, the database finds it among the mass-storage devices or identifies where it is stored offline.
    For offline media, the system generates an identifier and stores it in the
    database with the image.
    Color correction. Camerawise has individual modules for rgb-to-cmyk conversion, range compression (from 12- to 8-bit), tonal compression, color management and unsharp masking (usm). The user interface provides two modes of operation (skilled and unskilled), which hide and display certain parameters.
    . Tonal compression is used in setting the white and black points. Highlight, midtone and shadow areas can be adjusted separately. Calibration controls, used in conjunction with a densitometer or a digital camera, can be used to calculate the basic color-correction parameters. Eight adjustable usm settings are accessible.
    Modifications can be applied automatically to images upon entry. Dicomed sees this combination of automatic tasks as especially useful to photographers. The routing, processing and storing of images can be handled automatically during a shooting session, allowing the photographer to focus on the main task.

Retrieval. All fields assigned to images can be searched using an interface that supports simplified search strings. The user chooses a field for the search from a pulldown list of available fields, then selects a search parameter (like, exactly like, more than, less than, between or in) and types

a search pattern. "And," "or" and other Boolean operators can be inserted, and additional search parameters can be added to the query.

Images satisfying the query appear in an Image Gallery from which both the

thumbnail and full-screen versions can be viewed, without accessing the high -resolution images. Retrieved images can be output automatically on a specified proofing device as individual objects or as linked galley-style proofs. The Image Gallery also provides information about the image, such as its resolution, size and type.

Placement in Xpress. Camerawise has developed an Xtension to Xpress that allows images to be retrieved and placed on the Xpress page directly from the

database. When an image is placed in the document, the system applies the appropriate unsharp masking and, if the image is stored in rgb format in the database, rgb-to-cmyk conversion takes place. These conversions are done on a copy of the image that is stored separately and can be accessed only from the

page.

If the image later is scaled outside the limits set up by the system, it is transferred again and usm and other steps are applied again.

Because the conversion is done at the time the image is placed on the page

(or scaled outside the predefined limits), no additional waiting is required at the time of output. The software can be linked to Photoshop, where images can be altered and saved again.

The system supports remote database clients, i.e., access with security control to selected images, areas and functions in the system.

Pricing and availability. The master database can run on either a Power Macintosh or a Sun Sparcstation. Slaves can be Macintosh, Windows or Sun workstations. An nt version also will be available, if and when FoxPro is available. A package with licenses for five clients and a slave database based on FoxPro will be priced at $4,950. Included are conversion routines from rgb

to cmyk as well as usm. This version supports both the Dicomed Digital Camera

and scanners supporting Photoshop plug-ins. Shipments will start after Drupa.

Screening Xtension. Another product from Kolorbase is an Xtension to generate stochastic screening. Called Ornament Screening, it was shown printed on newsprint at 600 dpi using a 40-micron spot, but it appears to work well also at higher resolutions with smaller spot sizes. It is priced at less than

. $1,500.

Kolorbase Systems Ltd., Barratt House, 668 Hitchen Rd., Luton, Beds LU2 7XL, England; phone (44) 1582 410490, fax (44) 1582 417990.

Archives for Static Elements

In this section, we feature standard image archives, or those designed for

storage, search and retrieval only. Included in our coverage is an update on Cascade's MediaSphere library, now installed in the field, and the C-Quest archival system, which features an interesting way to form searches. We also look at an Iota system in its early stages.

Cascade MediaSphere update

Cascade showed its MediaSphere archival and retrieval system for images, text, multimedia objects and pages. Officially released at Seybold San Francisco last fall, it is running live in the field. Because we covered it last fall (see Vol. 3, No. 3), we'll report only highlights.

MediaSphere is built from three main integrated modules: the Muscat probabilistic search engine from Cambridge CD Publishing; a Sybase database; and Acrobat version 2.0. It uses an object-oriented approach that accepts any

kind of media and is distinctive in that it provides a full-text retrieval interface to an archive of complete pages stored in Adobe's Portable Document

Format (pdf).

MediaSphere is positioned as a library system for newspapers, but its approach could be adapted to a variety of publication archives. It currently is installed at the British Broadcasting Corporation and is scheduled for installation at the South Wales Argus (UK) and Cardinal Communications in New

York.

The Muscat search engine is impressive. Its natural-language interface, combined with probabilistic retrieval, yields an exceptionally fast retrieval

engine that is above average in its relevance rankings. (See Vol. 2, No. 8, for our earlier coverage of the technology.)

After retrieving a text selection and associated images, the user can ask for a preview, which launches Acrobat to display the page. Graphics, video and other objects can be archived with keywords stored in the database. When images are found, they are displayed at a small size. Clicking on a picture brings up the caption, keywords and iptc header, if applicable.

Pricing and configurations. MediaSphere is available in several configurations: cd-rom, flat-file database or full client-server database. Pricing varies, but an eight-user client-server system (with Sybase) sells for around $60,000. The client software is available for Windows and Macintosh platforms.

C-Quest navigates seas of photos

In what reminds us of the circus act of clowns continuously emerging from the little toy car, we seem to find new and different photo archiving systems

at every show we attend. Image Concepts Technology's C-Quest attempts to improve on the original keyword-based approach by implementing a search engine based on what it calls a "hierarchical synonym thesaurus." (We first saw C-Quest at Siggraph last year, but took another look in Boston. See SRDP, Vol. 8, No. 12.)

The system is being installed at the 15 U.S. imaging facilities of American Color, whose American Images subsidiary has obtained exclusive marketing rights to the C-Quest software in the graphic arts and digital imaging service industries.

While some archival products_such as T/One's Merlin_are adding synonym and

thesaurus features to handle mostly exception situations, C-Quest uses synonyms as its primary search strategy. It believes a more automatic solution to both the "multiple synonym" and "broader-narrower" problems saves time at both the librarian and user levels. Using conventional keyword engines, a broader search for "dogs" can miss images stored under "German Shepherd." Likewise, a narrower focus might miss an image keyed under the term "animal."

C-Quest claims that when using its synonym-based hierarchical thesaurus, a match is always found in the database.

Sometimes having too many hits is just as bad as having none. C-Quest has several strong features it calls Job Jacket and Save Matrix. These features allow users to save the results of searches as a matrix of thumbnail renderings within a customer's job jacket. Using a click of the right mouse button, the software eliminates any unwanted images from the matrix. A matrix can be saved for future use by the same operator or sent to another C-Quest user.

The engine is relatively fast, searching at a rate of more than 20,000 terms a second. However, in a database of more than a million records, Image Concepts recommends multiple server volumes.

Platforms. One of the most distinguishing characteristics of C-Quest is that it was developed as a truly cross-platform, client-server application. The C-Quest client software is available running under the OpenLook, Motif, Macintosh, dos, Windows and nt operating systems. The server software runs under Unix and enables tasks to be split across multiple servers in heavy traffic applications.

Being truly cross-platform makes posting client software on the Internet and conducting searches using tcp/ip viable for a C-Quest installation. Image

Concepts demonstrated a sample home page that customers could implement as a method for distribution of client software to potential image library users, ensuring they get the proper client application. Once the user has a copy of the client application and a password, they can access the image server directly using an Internet connection such as the World Wide Web , ftp, Telnet

or a bulletin board.

Installations. C-Quest has more than 20 installations, mostly in government agencies such as NASA, the Navy, DOA, HUD and the National Archive. It also has technical-documentation clients including General Motors, Caterpillar, General Electric and Goodyear Tire and Rubber Co. It has one retail installation at Polo/Ralph Lauren.

Image Concepts Technologies, 33 Post Rd. West, Marlboro, MA 01752; phone (508) 481-4406, fax (508) 481-4406.

American Images, 339 East Ave., Rochester, NY 14604; phone (716) 325-4200,

fax (716) 325-7449.

Iota previews image database

Boston provided us with the opportunity to get a progress report on how Iota Industries' Smart Imaging Technology (SIT) and Newsware products are faring in the market (see SRPS, Vol. 24, No. 11). Progress is being made on all fronts, particularly in the area of sales and marketing.

In addition to the newspaper and technical documentation demos we have seen before, Iota showed a prototype of a digital image database that can be managed by the software. Text for file identification purposes as well as catalog cards can be "attached" to each image. At this point, the software provides only rudimentary facilities for working with color images, but better color capabilities are in development, we were told. There are plenty of other features Iota will need to add to the software, depending on whether it is planning to provide images that are reusable (i.e., a live archive) or for reference only (i.e., as a morgue). Implementing Iota's software for creating

and managing a digital image archive was clearly in the early stages.

In its current state, the software does not recognize collections of related documents through which a user might want to search, although it is possible to incorporate cross-document links within a group of documents.

Modules, configurations and pricing. Iota has taken an additional step in marketing the software as a series of configurable modules, in addition to the three standard packages. Briefly, the individual modules consist of a Smart Image Format (SIF) Converter, a SIT Application Generator, read-only or full library viewer-browser modules (one is a network viewer and the other is a full network user with annotation capabilities), a Digital Library and a cd-based viewer.

The SIF Converter converts hard copy and PostScript documents or scanned images into SIF digital documents for further SIT processing. This application is now available for implementation into other library systems as an oem product. End-user pricing for a SIF Converter module (there can be one or more in a configuration) will be around $12,000 for a single copy and $6,000 for additional copies.

The SIT Application Generator takes SIF digital documents and creates an information base or library. It also provides data management capabilities. There are three existing SIT applications: Newsware, Superbook for cd-rom publishing and Vector. Pricing for the SIT Application Generator varies with the size of the documents (A2 or A4) and the number of operators. It ranges from $28,000 for nine operators handling A4 to $48,000 for nine operators handling A2 pages.

SIT libraries can be installed as network-accessible or as cd-rom-based entities. Network user modules, capable of adding personalized comments or annotations to stored documents, are priced at $1,000 each. Read-only network

browsers cost $500 each. A single workstation package, called a Mono Station and including one SIF Converter and one Generator for scanning, processing, finding and viewing documents, is priced at $12,000. Network configurations, which include a single SIF Converter and multiple Generators, are priced in the $20,000 to $40,000 range.

A Digital Library, priced at $600 per unit, is a way to coordinate vast amounts of information dispersed over multiple storage platforms including lans, optical discs, cd-roms, etc., for an individual user. It provides a local search index for full retrieval capabilities over the net, where information is stored. It also provides multimedia data enhancement capabilities and the ability to annotate and personalize the library. Digital

Library users in a dispersed community or users accessing a distributed archive can receive library updates on cd-rom, via modem or over networks, etc. There is also a stand-alone version of the Digital Library.

Large orders in the works. Iota has received three major orders, all of which are in the early stages of installation or are due to be installed soon. The largest and most significant of these is for a system that provides archive access to 200 workstations at Instituto Poligraffico Zecca in Rome. The other two customers are a U.S. government agency in Washington, DC, and the Harvard Business School in Boston, MA. All of these have extensive paper-based archives that will be converted and made available for search and

retrieval using Iota's SIT technology.

Other Iota installations include Offer Brothers; Tel Aviv University; Ben Gurion University and Cellcom (Cellular Telephones) in Israel; Triffik Technology in London; American Color in Tarrytown, NY, and West Palm Beach, FL; TV Guide; and various Hyphen demonstration facilities in the U.S., London and Paris.

SPECIAL FEATURES:   illustration; photograph; chart

DESCRIPTORS:  Image Processing Software; Image Scanning Software; DTP
 Software; Industry Trend; Trade Show Report; Seybold Seminars
SIC CODES:  7372  Prepackaged software

1/9/21     (Item 21 from file: 275)
DIALOG(R)File 275:Gale Group Computer DB(TM)
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01833431     SUPPLIER NUMBER: 17393381     (THIS IS THE FULL TEXT)
More notes from Nexpo: image handling, digital cameras and links to
 presses; image handling: archiving, retrieval, etc. (includes a related
 article on companies offering newspapers pre-made comic pages)
Seybold Report on Publishing Systems, v25, n1, p28(11)
Sep 1, 1995
ISSN: 0736-7260     LANGUAGE: English     RECORD TYPE: Fulltext
WORD COUNT:   6564     LINE COUNT:   00523

TEXT:
Image Handling: Archiving, Retrieval, etc.
Image management for Color Central
Adobe featured a new product, called Central Suite, to add
functionality to its Color Central product. Developed by Roderick Scott, it
essentially adds workflow features to Color Central. It allows for an
unlimited number of queues and folders for high- and low-resolution images
and fully automates the addition and removal of images from the opi server.
Central Suite can also circumvent Color Central Sampler's tendency to cease
processing when confronted with improperly named or formatted images.
The user can define hierarchical folders on the fly and drag and drop
images to them. Folders can then be dragged to the server for archiving or
to the trash for purging. The program features low volume or space warnings
and resolves duplicate name problems. It also supports name legalization
for nt servers with an optional name restore for Macintosh clients.
Specific file formats can optionally be restricted. Password
protection can be assigned to settings, preferences and activities. An
activity log tracks processed images and errors.
Central Suite, which will be available soon, can operate
simultaneously with Color Central and Color Central Sampler. It runs on
either Mac or nt platforms and will retail for $579.
Roderick Scott, 15642 83rd Ave., Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T5R 3T7;
phone (403) 484-7272, fax (403) 484-0772. Internet :
rscottco@tibalt.supernet.ab.ca or CompuServe: 70274,2013
AFP MacDesk handles photos, video
Agence France-Presse introduced a new Macintosh-based application for
the reception, processing and storage of photos, images and video
(QuickTime and Moov). Called MacDesk, the program features MacDeskCom for
receiving wire-feed information and supports dit3, mhp, tcp/ip protocols
through gpib, Ethernet and rs-232 interfaces. Up to five Mac clients can
access the Mac server receiving the feeds. Folders can be set up, to which
images can be dragged from MacDesk Browser for archiving on the server.
Images in the browser can be rotated for easier viewing. The number of
columns to display on the screen can be selected. Double-clicking on a
thumbnail produces a larger image. From the zoomed view, the next and
previous images can be displayed using the F1 and F2 keys.
Iptc header information can be searched using Boolean and wildcard
search routines.
MacDeskEdit can be used to acquire images from scanners via a twain
interface; to transmit files; to edit iptc information; and to save or
print files. Upon transmission, images are automatically placed in the out
basket. Color bars can be added; files can be saved in tiff, Photoshop or
jpeg format; and images can be brought into Photoshop for further editing.

No price has been set. The product is scheduled to be completed by year-end. A Windows version, called WinDesk, will be available at the same time. Macintosh requirements include System 7.5 and 32 mb of ram.

AFP moves. AFP has moved to a new address, effective in July (see below).

AFP, 1015 15th St., NW, Suite 500, Washington, DC 20005; phone (202) 289-0700, fax (212) 414-0634.

Ailink teams with B&L Parentheses

Ailink, which produces applications for the reception, distribution and archiving of wire-feed information, has now incorporated B&L Parentheses' Phrasea communications and database server. Ailink's products, which we've covered in the past (see Vol. 21, No. 20), include Photocom for receiving wire photos on a Macintosh, Visual Desk Plus for picture and page management, and Pagecom for compressing and sending Xpress, tiff and eps files to remote locations.

Ailink also showed Pronto, its new software for remote transmission of images, which runs on a PowerBook with either a Polaroid SprintScan or a Nikon CoolScan scanner. The system features automatic jpeg compression with a choice of quality levels, dit 3.2 and ccitt transmission protocols and pcmcia support.

Phrasea III. Phrasea III, the latest version of Parentheses' system, has been redesigned to work specifically with the Ailink system. It includes more than 150 features, such as the ability to archive any type of object (text, images, sound or movies) and search them via the same query.

Objects can be linked for future retrieval in different ways. Files placed together in the input folder are automatically associated with each other and will be retrieved together upon querying. Another way involves assigning fields in the database to tag files. Files with similar information in a particular field will then be retrieved upon querying. Files displayed in the browser after a query has been performed can also be linked. The user simply selects the files and hits the update button to associate them.

A person using the client software can also perform simultaneous queries on databases stored on a local disk, a network server or a remote device. The user sets up connection protocols for each database and selects the ones to query. Low -resolution versions of retrieved files can be stored in baskets, either locally or on the server, for later viewing without connecting to any database. Double-clicking on images in baskets initiates a connection to the appropriate database for access to the high -resolution images.

Beginning soon, the Phrasea database will be accessible via the World Wide Web. A cgi script will be used to transmit the query information on the Web page to the database.

Phrasea is currently in use in more than 2,000 installations in Europe. Reuters is considering using Phrasea as its main isdn browser.

Prices start at $3,000 for the Phrasea server and $900 for Phrasea Agence, the client software.

AGT adds five Digital Link modules

Applied Graphics Technologies introduced a new version, 2.0, of its Digital Link System and five new Digital Link applications. With this new release, it is possible to tailor the system to fit each user's unique production and archiving requirements. Also new are additional input alternatives, support for both Macintosh and nt workstations for photo editing, automated archiving on cds and integration of the database as part of the system.

Input alternatives. The system previously supported only Photo CD images, usually captured on Kodak Photo CD Imaging Workstations and input

to the system through the Digital Link Photo CD Gateway. Now users can select from two additional image-capture applications: the Linotype-Hell Topaz flatbed scanner and standard wire-service picture desks. In addition, the new release supports conversion of tiff images received from other sources.

The Topaz scans reflective originals, negatives, transparencies and other flat art, in sizes up to 12x18. The new Digital Link Picture Desk Gateway automatically transfers images from domestic and international wire-service picture desks to the Digital Link System, where they are selected, managed and archived. The initial release supports images received in AP tiff, Reuters jpeg and the international iptc/naa standard.

Export and conversion alternatives. Revision 2.0 also supports enhanced export and conversion capabilities, including export of images in gif, pict, tiff and jpeg formats. The new export options also permit simultaneous exporting of both fpo and high-resolution images, with different specifications.

The system includes a new internal image format, or structure, to be used during import, editing and retrieval. When imported into the Digital Link environment, different image file types are automatically converted into a new "preview pack" format. The original high-resolution source image remains intact, with links connecting the preview pack with the high-resolution version. Each preview pack is then stored in a special jpeg structure, containing four resolutions from 64x96 through 512x768 pixels. The different resolutions are optimized to improve performance during browsing, previewing, positioning and final use.

"Lite" photo editor. A new "lite" photo-editing application, called the Digital Link Photo Assistant, will be available as an option for both Macintosh and Windows environments. The "lite" version of the full Digital Link Photo Editor provides the tools to view, sort, annotate and crop images stored locally or on the Digital Link server. Final production tasks, such as color corrections and image export, still have to be done with the full application.

Remote editing capabilities, which are standard on the Photo Editor, are included with the Photo Assistant, which will enable remote users to review and select images stored on the Digital Link server, using transmitted preview packs, and then dynamically request transmission of high-resolution images for final use.

Integrated database options. AGT also introduced the Digital Link Database, a database fully integrated with the Digital Link System, which, according to AGT, significantly reduces the search times and takes better advantage of image resources. With the Digital Link Database option, low-resolution images are searched by keyword, limited text or bar code, initiated from a Digital Link Photo Editor or Photo Assistant workstation.

The results of the search are displayed in the editing interface, where images can be handled in the ordinary way.

Larger cd-rom changers. To handle more images, AGT introduced the Digital Link Storage Manager, which provides automated access to images stored on cd-rom changers (18-, 100- or 500-disc capacity). After a Digital Link Photo Editor or Photo Assistant user has browsed the database thumbnails and requested a higher-quality image, the Storage Manager automatically loads the requested cd and copies the files to a hard-disk cache to optimize performance.

The system also supports multiple storage devices on a network, providing integrated access to a very large near-line archive.

Archival. Digital Link Photo Archivist, standard with release 2.0, enables the user to write archive discs without operator intervention. By adding the Pioneer DRM-5004x 500-Disc Cd-rom Auto Changer and the Digital

Link Storage Manager to the Digital Link environment, users can automate the entire archiving process, including sorting, selection, archiving to disc, uploading thumbnails to the database, and finally deleting archived images from the server. Archiving can be scheduled to take place at low-production times, to reduce the impact on production and system users.

Sales. Release 2.0 and the new optional applications are planned to be available in the third quarter. Pricing has not yet been released.

AGT announced that it had installed the Digital Link System at two international daily newspaper publishers.

At BZ in Berlin, the Axel Springer Verlag newspaper, AGT installed two systems for production purposes. The system was sold by AGT's European business partner and distributor, Opus ImageConsult GmbH of Stuttgart. BZ (circ. 350,000) scans and archives 5,000 to 6,000 images daily from local and remote sources. It manages a short-term online archive of more than 10,000 images, including those from wire services. According to AGT, this order means that the Digital Link System applications will be translated into German.

The new Group Cicsa daily color broadsheet newspaper from Mexico City, Reforma (circ. 90,000), will use a Digital Link System to improve the quality of published images and to create and manage an archive of digital images stored on cd-r. Each day the paper scans more than 800 color images, which then are archived onto cd. Approximately 250 scans are used in daily production.

Auto-Grafica adds storage, retrieval

Like other newspaper system developers, Auto-Grafica is trying to figure out what it means to be a full-service provider in an era of shrink-wrapped software. Working mainly in South America, it has come up with the same answer as most North American vendors: focus on newspaper-specific functions, leaving pagination and output to Quark and PostScript. It has developed a very comprehensive product line, enabling it to serve well those customers that it reaches.

Its products for the storage and retrieval of text and photos center on SD-Arc, an image-retrieval system, and SD-PageBox, a text and graphics library system. SD-Arc reminds us of Adobe's Fetch program, supporting keyword searching of header fields followed by a display of image thumbnails, support for multiple networks and tracking of images even after they have been moved to offline media.

SD-PageBox maintains links between stories and photos. The system clearly is intended for repurposing of content, but we didn't see any built-in tools for automatically transferring information out to, say, an Internet server.

New features for Canto's Cumulus

As is often the case, Canto Software appeared in the Apple booth, showing a prerelease version of its Cumulus 2.5 database application. It includes full support for Apple's scripting with recordability. As the user operates the system, each step is recorded and saved as a script.

Cumulus also features a folder called Vento, which contains a new folder-watching application. It can contain a series of subfolders assigned to various Cumulus databases. As files are placed in a folder, Cumulus executes an AppleScript that automatically updates the Cumulus database to which that folder is assigned.

A new Adobe Illustrator adapter allows a user to call Cumulus from within Illustrator 5.0 or 5.5 to place an image file from a Cumulus catalog. Cumulus supports various file formats, including text, QuickTime and sound. Retrieved images can be output in contact-sheet format for easy viewing.

Canto has recently signed agreements with Linotype-Hell and Agfa to

bundle Cumulus with some of their products.

Cumulus 2.5 will be available in September for $1,795, which includes a server version and five clients.

Dalai features PowerWire system

Dalai showed PowerWire, a multiline reception, decoding, searching, edition and wire-management system. Up to ten different serial signals can be received at the same time. For each port, different communication parameters -- data bits, baud rate, parity, etc. -- can be defined independently. In addition, each port can handle different protocols and character sets. PowerWire supports more than 30 different transmission protocols, including the five-bit "baudot" protocol.

Once the signal has been received, it is stored as a simple text file. Each file contains hidden in its Macintosh resource fork information such as its agency, news category (sports, international, etc.), news priority (flash, bulletin, etc.) and reception time and date.

PowerWire-Extractor is used to read each file's information and distribute the stories to user-definable folders. The number of folders is limited only by software and operating-system constraints. Each folder also contains index files for searching using Dalai's other product, Neza II, or the NezaXT Xtension for Xpress.

PowerWire will be available soon in English for $3,500. Neza II and NezaXT are priced at $199.

Neza II takes advantage of specific index files that are produced by PowerWire to allow sorting and full-text searching of stories. Neza II shows the first part of each text story for easy selection. Clicking on the story opens it and a small word processor allows text editing.

Another Xtension, called PageXtractor XT, provides a way to import searchable Xpress pages into archiving applications such as Fetch and Cumulus. PageXtractor produces a thumbnail and a full-size preview of the Xpress page and extracts all the text in the file. When archived in Fetch, for example, the thumbnail is displayed in the browser. Double-clicking produces the larger image. Version 2.0 of Fetch supports full-text searching of the description field, which contains all the text extracted from the Xpress page.

The price is $775, available now for the Macintosh. A Windows version is in the works.

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IBM implements QBIC in Digital Library

IBM has implemented its Query By Image Content (QBIC) search protocol into the IBM Digital Library. QBIC, which won a Seybold Award for Excellence in March (see The Seybold Report on Desktop Publishing, Vol. 9, No. 1), allows searching for images based on colors, textures and shapes. The Digital Library allows owners of content to digitize their assets so users can access various archived objects, such as text, video and images, stored on different databases (which is similar to the SRA system reported in our article on online delivery of news). It is possible to search for words, phrases, proper names and synonyms, using natural-language queries. Queries can be performed on information retrieved from a previous query.

QBIC technology supports searching for the dominant color, or up to five different colors, in an rgb or his image. Shape queries allow choosing from a menu of shapes to retrieve images that resemble it. A special tool allows customizing shapes to define images more exactly. Texture queries look for differences in coarseness, contrast or randomness of a texture.

Hits are ranked by relevancy and displayed in a list format. Double-clicking on an item produces the image, text, video, etc.

The system also supports rights management via encryption and watermarking, and usage tracking for billing applications. Clients are currently available on aix and Windows. A Mac client is in the works.

IBM is working with Dreamworks SKG, a film studio company founded by Steven Spielberg, Jeffrey Katzenberg and David Geffen, to manage its video archives and to integrate with its SGI and Microsoft products. The system is being used by the Vatican Library to digitize priceless archives. The digitized images contain watermarks to prevent illegal reproduction.

The Vatican Library. The extensive Vatican project involves using two high-resolution IBM Time-Delay-and-Integration (TDI) scanners to digitize its collection of more than 150,000 manuscripts. The scanner features a 3,072-element ccd that captures 3,072x 4,096 pixels in 36-bit color. Mounted on a customized copystand with a halogen lamp, the scanner moves across the image plane to capture transparent and reflective objects from 35mm to 18x24 (or, by a rotational provision of its copystand, larger originals). It also scans three-dimensional objects. A through-the-lens viewfinder is provided for manual focusing. The scanner, developed by IBM, has been installed in prototype form at several sites for production and research.

The system handles 80 scans per day per scanner, and thus far 20,000 images have been scanned, 75% of which are monochrome. A group of Vatican scholars selected the manuscripts to be scanned, which illustrate that the Vatican Library covers all the humanities, not just religion. Unfortunately, the manuscripts are not categorized. (One attempt to organize them resulted in manuscripts being bound together based on their size, rather than their content.)

Once digitized, the images are sent to the Pontifico Academy in Rio de Janeiro for archiving, where they are compressed, using IBM software, into 1-mb files and watermarked with the Vatican Library seal. A special watermarking technique allows the watermark to vary in intensity, depending on the image, to avoid distorting the original, while still preventing unauthorized copying. IBM's watermarking process uses a complex set of algorithms to interweave the watermark into the image, making removal nearly impossible (or, at least, too painstakingly tedious to endeavor).

The images are cataloged to include information about the type of parchment the manuscript appeared on and the language it was written in.

At this point, only scholars have access to these images from the Rio database. They currently retrieve them via Gopher, but a Mosaic interface is in the works. To preserve quality, images can be enlarged only 2:1. The browser allows scholars to cut and paste from different images to build a personal presentation.

IBM has been granted permission to post low-resolution versions of some of the images on its home page. This is the address:
        http://www.ibm.com/features/library/manuscript.html

IBM introduces MediaStreamer. IBM also introduced the MediaStreamer, a multimedia storage and delivery system that provides a new architecture for video, text and graphics information. It accepts atm or broadcast input, supports analog and digital output and can hold up to 1,000 hours of offline video.

This non-risc-based system consists of a processor, a storage unit and a series of video cards. Using IBM's Adstar Distributed Storage Management software, MediaStreamer automatically transfers data to the most cost-effective media. In other words, infrequently accessed information would be transferred to tape, while more frequently used information would be stored on disk. It currently supports 1.5-megabit-per-second (mbps) mpeg (approximately 300 hours of video) and will eventually support 6- and 15-mbps mpeg2. The initial unit handles between 20 and 30 streams.

A family of servers, to be released at the end of 1995 or the beginning of '96, will be designed to support thousands of streams.

An additional storage server can be used with the MediaStreamer to archive information.

Pricing is based on configuration. A small system, consisting of 5-6 streams, costs about $30,000. A larger system, with 28 streams, costs $250,000-$300,000. IBM notes that, as more streams are added in the future, the price per stream will drop.

The MediaStreamer video server is being used by Dow Jones to distribute its content to financial professionals with broadcast and retrieval capabilities over an atm network.

New start in U.S. for PhotoImaging

PhotoImaging North America demonstrated an image and text database making a new bid in the U.S. It is marketed as Synapse in Australia and as NewsLink in Europe, where it has 25 installations. It is starting to make some headway now in the U.S. It was shown by Job Systemintegration at Seybold Seminars '93 but didn't break into the market.

A client-server system running under Unix, it allows structured and content-based searching of text and image databases. One of its features is to make the archive available on the World Wide Web . Another feature is its ability to archive information directly from an Xpress document, which is done by tagging manually each element of a story -- i.e., headline, body text, byline, images, etc. The user can add information about the file, such as the publication date, the publication name and the number of pages -- all entered manually through a dialog. We would like to see part of this functionality automated, such as to have the system identify various elements based on their Xpress style tags.

An image of each page that the selected article appeared on can be generated in pict or bmp format, which will be retrieved along with the text upon querying.

PhotoImaging has developed an interface to front-end systems including SII, Atex and QPS. The system is used also to link picture desks to a full image archive -- that is, to provide an image database for production at newspaper sites.

Pricing, which is based on the number of concurrent users, ranges between $3,000 and $5,000 per seat.

The market. PhotoImaging was using Nexpo to get the message to American newspapers that the company has a working archiving system. When it had tested the American market last time, there had been no working product to show, just a prototype. Job Systemintegration also had confused the public about the status of its customer sites, using European sites as references when it was demonstrating in the U.S. and referring to U.S. customers when it was in Europe, making it difficult to figure out exactly what customers - - if there were any -- it had in which areas.

This year, PhotoImaging had a user list in the booth including nine different newspapers. We don't know the status of each, but we know that some systems have been installed.

PhotoImaging North America, 333 North Alabama St., Suite 240, Indianapolis, IN 46204; phone (317) 262-4896, fax (317) 262-4849.

SCC adds functions to photo browser

The Software Construction Company, which comprises the combined software offerings from the former Iron Mike and Object Quest companies, showed PhotoGrid Pro, an upgraded version of its PhotoGrid photo-browsing, folder-watching and iptc header-editing software. The pro version adds crop and publish commands. Crop enables images to be previewed and cropped without having to open and edit the high-resolution file. Images can also be rotated for easier manipulation.

The publish command supports copying an image to a "to be published" or "to be archived" folder. A time-stamped proof of the image showing the cropping, sizing, iptc and publication information can also be created. Additionally, a publication date keyword can be inserted into the iptc caption data.

PhotoGrid and PhotoGrid Pro, available for Mac and Windows, are priced at $549 and $749 respectively, or $3,294 and $4,494 for a ten-seat site license.

Faster manipulation. SCC showed its Photoshop plug-in kit, which increases the acquisition, saving and exporting speed of jpeg and other files. It runs in native Power Mac mode and, SCC claims, is 3.5 times faster than the version for 68000 Macintoshes. It costs $299 for a single-user and $1,796 for a ten-seat site license.

Aid to separation. SCC also showed ExpresSep, a Quark Xtension for the Macintosh that can output PostScript Level 2 cmyk (eps jpeg) images from Xpress on either a Level 1 or Level 2 printer. Developed in cooperation with Multi-Ad Services, the Xtension allows users to generate separations on any PostScript device as well as take advantage of image compression to speed workflow and reduce file sizes. ExpresSep is priced at $295 for single copies and $2,360 for a ten-seat site license.

Explorer. Last year, PressLink showed the Explorer browser for PressLink services. The software, written by SCC, was to be incorporated with the AppleSearch engine so users of the PressLink Service could search local archives as well as the online one (see Vol. 23, No. 22).

PressLink has since dropped the AppleSearch idea, but SCC hasn't. It is now offering the PressLink Explorer as an image and graphics database based on AppleSearch. SCC also offers several extensions for Explorer, including SCC OffLine, a hardware-software combo that connects a Kodak cd-rom disc jukebox to an AppleSearch database. AppleSearch indexes the caption data from the images on the cd-roms and loads the proper cd to retrieve a requested image. Numerous xtnd translators for different file requirements are also available. Explorer is still in the prerelease stages and is currently in beta testing at the Miami Herald. SCC OffLine is priced at $5,000. Xtnd filters are available for $199 each.

Converting wire photos. SCC PhotoFactory software for background conversion of wire photos to SCC jpeg files now has optional modules to handle Reuters, AFP and AP. The AP module includes an AP Listener to receive files by gpib from an AP LeafDesk or "PADR" board. PhotoFactory is available for Mac, Power Mac and Windows platforms. The single-user price is $1,199. A ten-seat site license costs $7,194. Kits for AP, Reuters and AFP are priced at $3,750, $1,750 and $1,750, respectively.

Image Editing

Adaptive power

Adaptive Solutions demonstrated a card for accelerating rgb-to-cmyk conversion, resizing and rotation functions in Photoshop. Operations that would normally take ten minutes on a Power Mac can take only ten seconds with the Powershop card, which splits the processing among numerous dsps. The card also accelerates other functions, such as acquiring images from digital cameras. A Photo CD accelerator module is planned, which will be able both to read and write Photo CD images. The card is currently available in Nubus and PDS configurations for $2,995.

Adaptive Solutions also markets PhotoPerfect, a Photoshop plug-in that automates the correcting of color images. The filter automatically converts the image into lab and reads the pixels to determine what amount of blurring, if any, needs to be applied to the a and b channels. It also looks at the luminance channel to make sharpening and blurring adjustments. PhotoPerfect then performs all changes automatically (lightning fast, we

might add, if the Powershop card is installed). Images appear with more sharpness and less noise, which is especially useful when adjusting images taken with digital cameras.

Binuscan upgrades ColorPro

Binuscan introduced to the U.S. market Binuscan II Professional ToolKit, an upgraded version of its ColorPro software for correcting color images (see our report from Drupa). It can perform an unlimited number of rgb color corrections and cmyk color separations. It also can process black-and-white images.

The ToolKit comes bundled with Binuscan Color Correct and a special version of Kodak Photo CD Access Plus for $3,950.

Since its introduction at Drupa, some enhancements have been added. It can now place low-resolution Photo CD images directly into Xpress when used with Job Manager. Based on the size of the image box, the program will automatically select the proper high-resolution ycc image from the Photo CD. Without Job Manager, a user can select a low-resolution image from Photo CD, resize it in Photoshop and place it in a to-do folder. Binuscan II will automatically correct the image, which can then be placed on an Xpress page. The ToolKit can now handle reading and writing of jpeg images.

Binuscan also showed ColorPro (see The Seybold Special Report, Vol. 3, No. 3) and Job Manager Xtension (SSR, Vol. 3, No. 9).

More automation from Flamingo Bay

Flamingo Bay-ImageXpress demonstrated its ScanPrep and ScanPrepPro software for processing images quickly and easily in Photoshop. When used in conjunction with Adaptive's Powershop card, it provides lightning-fast results.

ScanPrep automates the acquisition of images from desktop scanners. ScanPrepPro automates Photoshop's image-processing tools. Using one interface, the operator fills in information about the image -- type of scanner (if scanning), input and output sizes, desired result, printing process, paper stock, dot gain and screen preference. Custom setups can also be saved and reapplied.

The program does the rest. It can automatically descreen images; apply unsharp masking based on selected output resolution and output size; and adjust the histogram based on print specifications. It also includes a facility for calibrating the monitor and output device. If an image being diagnosed has insufficient resolution to produce the requested results, ScanPrepPro notifies the user and offers to resize the image or to interpolate it.

For line art, ScanPrepPro supports copydot capabilities to allow scanners to capture images at 600 or 1,200 dpi, up to 85-line screens.

ScanPrepPro provides automatic adjustment of picture contrast and color saturation by reading and adjusting each color's histogram unattended. It can also generate dropouts and halftones, and support Photo CD images, which it converts to rgb.

ScanPrepPro is available now for $695.

Flamingo Bay-ImageXpress, 1121 Casa Nova Court, Lawrenceville, GA 30244; phone (404) 564-9924, fax (404) 564-1632.

Journey manages photos

Journey Communications demonstrated its first product, SkedMaster, a multiuser system for managing the workflow of a photo or art department. SkedMaster was developed by full-time professionals at the Orange County Register and has been used there for four years. Journey Communications is currently marketing the product.

The system is based on setting up multiple shifts for the photo or art department personnel to work. Photo assignments can be scheduled up to a year in advance. On a daily basis, the system receives and tracks photo

request forms, which can be generated on a Macintosh or imported from a front-end system, such as one from Atex or System Integrators.

Editors use a graphical, color-coded interface to manage the day's work:

* Blue signifies an out-of-town assignment.
* Pink indicates that the image has been archived.
* Green warns that a particular assignment is not to be reassigned to someone else.
* Red shows which images will be published the next day.

Changes are made by dragging tasks from one person to another or from one time to another.

Images from completed assignments can be archived with the original work request and retrieved for later viewing. Thumbnail previews and captions are attached to the archived requests. Users can perform full-text searches on any field in the assignments.

SkedMaster is expected to be released soon for a price of $3,500-$5,000 for multiple seat.

Journey Communications, Box 315, 418 Fourth St., NE, Charlottesville, VA 22902; phone (804) 961-2500, fax (804) 961-2507. Internet : jourcomm@aol.comm

Digital Cameras and Scanners

AP enhances NC2000's capture of details

The NC2000 digital camera has been faring well in the newspaper industry since its introduction. AP has made some firmware adjustments to the color matrix that allow the chip to capture more details in highlight and shadow areas and produce less noise at 1,600 iso.

Besides the original NC2000, which now is available with the new Nikon N90s body, AP showed a new version based on the Canon EOS camera. Called the EOS DCS 3c, it offers the same features as the NC2000, but it will appeal to Canon die-hards.

AP is working to increase the frame rate of the cameras to support a greater number of continuous frames.

AP reports that there are currently 5,300 units in the field. Among the customers is a Canadian newspaper that has completely abandoned its darkroom in favor of the NC2000. As Jim Gerberich pointed out, "It's not an experiment anymore." Digital technology is being accepted and used in the newspaper industry. As an example, Gerberich pointed out that some of the first photos from the bombing in Oklahoma City were taken with the NC2000 and some images were good enough for the cover of Newsweek.

The main plug of AP and other digital camera developers at the show was how cost effective a digital camera can be when you calculate the yearly cost of film and other photographic supplies, plus the time savings and the reduction in environmental waste. Most newspapers are finding that the switch to digital photography makes a lot of sense, even for small newspapers. The Jonesboro (AR) Sun, for example, is a 30,000-circulation daily that owns two AP cameras.

The NC2000 is priced at $15,500 and includes one 105-mb pcmcia card.

Kodak shows Canon version of DCS 460

Like AP, Kodak introduced a Canon EOS-based version of its DCS 460 digital camera, called the EOS DCS 5. Kodak also demonstrated its older DCS 420 and newer DC 40 cameras. Exhibitors could have their picture taken with their choice of camera and output on a Kodak XLS 8600 printer.

When we asked if we could publish a photo of one of our staff members taken with each of Kodak's cameras, to show a comparison, a Kodak representative stated that he felt this was not a "scientific" method, that the setting was not "ideal" and that the photos "might make the cameras look bad." To us, that seems a strange way to sell a camera aimed at use in

nearly any situation in which a journalist might find himself.

Nikon features E2 and new scanners

Exhibiting in Apple's booth, Nikon demonstrated its recently announced LS-1000 and LS-4500 AF scanners. The LS-1000, also called the SuperCoolscan, is a single-pass, 2,700-dpi, portable 35mm slide scanner that offers greater speed than its Coolscan little brother. It uses dsps to deliver throughput at 3 mb per second. Nikon claims that a slide can be scanned in about 40 seconds at a resolution of 2,592x3,888 pixels. Positive and negative color or monochrome slides can be scanned.

The SuperCoolscan features 12-bit a/d conversion for a wide dynamic range, autofocus and an optional automatic slide feeder, the SF-100. The autofeeder will hold up to 50 mounted slides for unattended operation. It mounts on the front of the LS-1000, so no cables are needed. The scanner also comes with an Adaptec AVA-1505 scsi card.

The list price for the LS-1000 is $2,695. The optional autofeeder costs $685. Both should be available soon. Minimum requirements to operate the scanner include 16 mb of ram and a 300-mb hard disk.

Bundled with the new scanner is Nikon's updated scanner software, Nikon Scan. This Photoshop plug-in is twain compliant and can also be used with Nikon Control, Nikon's image-archiving application, which enables unattended batch scanning when used with the SF-100.

Nikon Scan will be bundled with Nikon's AX-1200 Scantouch flatbed scanner. The new version of the software features a bit-adaptive gamma curve editor, a resizable preview, a zoom, autoexposure and autofocus, and user controls over cropping, resolution, resizing, color balance, contrast, brightness, white and black points, and sharpening. It also provides a fiducial reference scale, a pixel address coordinate display, an on-screen densitometer and a histogram.

LS-4500 AF for transparencies. Nikon's other new scanner, the LS-4500 AF, is a three-pass, multiformat desktop scanner that handles negatives and transparencies from 35mm to 4x5, including panorama formats. Available for Mac or pc platforms, the LS-4500 AF offers 3,000-dpi resolution for 35mm scans and 1,000 dpi for 4x5 scans. It scans 36 bits of information (12 bits per channel) and features a front-loading film carrier, which can be rotated to align slides prior to scanning. Up to six 35mm frames can be gang scanned.

Nikon says that a 35mm slide can be scanned in about 120 seconds. Nikon Scan software is included. The scanner will be bundled with an unannounced third-party software application. It is scheduled to be shipped late this summer, priced at $11,395. It requires a minimum of 32 mb of ram and a 500-mb hard disk.

E2s digital camera. Nikon also demonstrated its E2s digital camera, which had undergone initial shipments a month before the show. Current pricing is $15,125 for the E2 model and $18,365 for the E2s. Packages include the camera body, video cable, a power supply with a quick-charge unit, a dc adapter, a rechargeable battery, an ac cable, a memory card and Nikon's browser software for viewing images. An optional lcd monitor can be purchased to play back images from the camera.

Nikon said that the Ford Motor Company had purchased multiple cameras and that Disney also had placed an order.

The Coolprint, Nikon's portable printer, is being used in the field by the U.S. FBI and was used at the bombing site in Oklahoma City, Nikon said.

Another customer is the Philadelphia police department, which uses it to print mug shots and ids.

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SPECIAL FEATURES:   illustration; photograph

Ella Colbert                        01/30/01